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Survey of Amherst County, Virginia

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Foreword

The purpose of this survey is two-fold. First, we want to locate and preserve the records and traditions of the past life of Amherst County. This must be done soon if it is to be done at all, for the records are being relegated to the junk-heap and the bonfire; and the traditions are disappearing even more rapidly before the new era. The history we wish to preserve is not only the official record of the county, but the story of the every-day life of its people,—their work, their play, their speech, thought and customs. In short, we want to reconstruct, as best we can, the history of the Country-side.

Second, we hope to bring to the attention of the people of Amherst the need of the work. The outline is in no sense complete or comprehensive. It is meant only to be suggestive and perhaps to serve as a guide in the search for the material.

In conclusion, we want to urge on every person in the county to cooperate with the committee in locating the sources of history, and in helping them to preserve that "rich inheritance of noble memories" which should be the property of all Americans.

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COMMITTEE.

Outline for an Historical Survey of Amherst County

I. ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS:

1. MOUNDS. EARTHWORKS. SITES.

Locate and give description of mounds, caves, quarries, gravel-pits, burial-places, village sites, etc.

2. COLLECTIONS AND SPECIMENS.

Locate collections or stray specimens of arrow-heads, stone and copper implements, axes, pottery, pipes, fleshers, totems, etc.

II. HISTORICAL MATERIAL:

1. PUBLIC ARCHIVES.

Will books	Marriage bonds
Deed books	Land grants
Order books	Land surveys
Judgment books	Muster rolls

Special acts of legislature in regard to the county
Letters or petitions relating to the county

2. PRIVATE ARCHIVES.

Records of schools, colleges, companies, clubs, or any private corporation.

3. OTHER MANUSCRIPTS OR PRINTED MATERIAL.

Old books	Commissions
Pamphlets	Ledgers
Magazines	Farm records
Newspapers	Parish records
Letters	Directories
Diaries	Placards
Scrapbooks	Proclamations
Licenses	

4. HISTORICAL RELICS.

Portraits	Coverlets
Pictures	Tools
Antiques	Fire arms
Old China	Agricultural implements
Old Furniture	Vehicles
Samplers	War relics

5. HISTORIC PLACES.

The first settlement in the community	
Historic buildings	Battlefields
Early churches	Boundary lines
Old schools	Birthplaces of famous people
Old inns	
Old cemeteries	Historic trees
Settlements that "used to be"	Old trails
Mill sites	Trade and travel routes

6. TRADITIONAL HISTORY.

Memories of old inhabitants of the county.

Stories of the descendants of families that have lived
a long time in the country.

7. FOLK-WAYS.

Note especially the characteristics in speech and
social customs of each element in the population.

ENGLISH :

Note the balladry, games, and collocations of speech
which are those of eighteenth century England; and
any reproduction of the special idioms of any English
county.

OTHER EUROPEAN PEOPLES :

Keep the same things in mind for the Scotch, Irish,
and Welsh elements in the population; and for the
people from each continental country.

NEGRO :

Note especially the music, the "Spirituals", the folk-

tales, the superstitions,—whatever connotes Africa, or the survival in speech or customs of the earlier period of slavery.

INDIAN :

Do any Indian words survive among the "Issues?" Any Indian customs? Games? Oratory? Note any of the ways or habits of thought which have survived from an earlier civilization.



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